

Last week I supported House passage of [H.R. 872](#) , the “Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2011.” This legislation would protect agricultural and public safety pesticide applicators from the unnecessary, expensive and duplicative regulation under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The legislation became necessary after a federal court struck down a previous Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) decision that the use of pesticides for agriculture and other purposes (like those used to control mosquitoes in our area) is exempt from further permitting requirements under the CWA because they are already properly regulated under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). In reversing the EPA decision, the court determined that a pesticide applied for beneficial use suddenly becomes hazardous after its application, even though regulations under FIFRA have been carefully tailored to ensure proper pesticide application to avoid direct discharges into waters of the United States.

This court ruling imposes tremendous new burdens and costs on agriculture and impedes the ability of mosquito control districts to spray pesticides to reduce the threat of West Nile virus in Northern California, which could compromise public health. For these reasons, I was proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation in order to uphold the EPA’s original rule and 30 years of precedent in pesticide regulation. I hope that the Senate can work quickly to send this legislation to President Obama’s desk and avoid this unnecessary regulatory burden on our farms and communities.